

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. (Amended) A recoil starter, comprising

a rotary driving member that is adapted to be rotated by pulling a recoil rope,

an interlocking rotary member that is adapted to be rotated independently of the rotary driving member,

a buffering spring coupled directly between the rotary driving member and the interlocking rotary member, applying a rotational bias between the rotary driving member and the interlocking rotary member, and adapted to transmit the rotation of the rotary driving member to the interlocking rotary member, and

a hook portion at one end of the buffering spring and located within the buffering spring.

Please add the following new claims:

--7. (New) A recoil starter, comprising

a rotary driving member that is adapted to be rotated by pulling a recoil rope,

an interlocking rotary member that is adapted to be rotated independently of the rotary driving member, and

a buffering spring coupled between the rotary driving member and the interlocking rotary member, applying a rotational bias between the rotary driving member and the interlocking rotary member, and adapted to transmit the rotation of the rotary driving member to the interlocking rotary member,

wherein the interlocking rotary member includes a power transmission pulley to which the rotation of the rotary driving member is transmitted through the buffering member and a centrifugal ratchet mechanism coupled to the power transmission pulley and adapted to be

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coupled to a crankshaft of an internal combustion engine for transmitting the rotation of the power transmission pulley to the crankshaft of the internal combustion engine.

8. (New) The recoil starter according to claim 7, wherein the rotary driving member and the interlocking rotary member are disposed on a common rotational axis.

9. (New) The recoil starter according to claim 7, wherein the buffering member is a torsion coil spring or a spiral spring.

10. (New) The recoil starter according to claim 8, wherein the buffering member is a torsion coil spring or a spiral spring.—

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of and objections to the claims set forth in the Official Action of November 22, 2002, are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-6 are pending. Claims 1-5 have been rejected and claim 6 is objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

None of the amendments to the claims introduces new matter.

A marked-up version showing the new claims is appended hereto as Exhibit A.

Rejection of Claims 1-5:

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ohnishi (U.S. Patent No. 5,537,966). Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). The Examiner has asserted that the Ohnishi reference discloses a recoil starter, comprising a rotary driving member (24) that is adapted to be rotated by pulling a recoil rope (18), an interlocking rotary member (36) that is adapted to be rotated independently of the rotary driving member

(24), and a buffering spring (32) coupled between the rotary driving member (20) and the interlocking rotary member (32), applying a rotational bias between the rotary driving member (24) and the interlocking rotary member (36), and adapted to transmit the rotation of the rotary driving member (24) to the interlocking rotary member (36), as shown in Fig. 1-11.

However, as shown in Fig. 11 of the Ohnishi reference, the starter according to Ohnishi necessarily includes speed reduction mechanism 40 and one-way clutch mechanism 60. In the starter disclosed in Ohnishi, second drum 36 begins rotating through speed reduction mechanism 40, one-way clutch mechanism 60, and spiral spring 32 upon the repetitive driving of recoil pulley 16. According to the invention of the present application, however, the driving of rope reel 21 is directly transmitted to power transmitting pulley 31 through torsion coil spring 15 without the aid of the speed reduction mechanism and the one-way clutch mechanism.

Applicants have amended Claim 1 of the instant application to reflect this difference in the structures of Ohnishi and the instant application. Specifically, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the buffering spring is coupled directly between the rotary driving member and the interlocking rotary member. Accordingly, the Ohnishi reference does not disclose each and every element of amended Claim 1, nor does the Ohnishi reference suggest, either alone or in combination with any references made of record, the combination recited in amended Claim 1.

Thus, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn.

Applicants have submitted herewith a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement making of record Japanese Examined Utility Model Publication No. 6-16964 (1994). According to a translation of claim 1 of the publication, a recoil starter for transmitting rotation

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of a reel to a pulley located on an engine side is disclosed by utilizing a centrifugal ratchet cam, where the cam is rotatably mounted on the outer periphery of a boss portion extending from a bearing portion of a second reel and the first reel is connected to the cam with a damper spring. However, the invention as recited in amended Claim 1 of the instant application, unlike the Japanese Examined Utility Model Publication No. 6-16964, has hook portion 15a at one end of the torsion coil spring 15 that is located within the torsion coil spring 15 as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, which results in a width of the starter mechanism that can be shortened in the axial direction.

Because Claims 2-6 depend from what is now believed to be allowable Claim 1, the rejections and objections to claims 2-6 should also be withdrawn.

Objection to Claim 6:

Claim 6 stands objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but, according to the Examiner, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 6 has been rewritten as new Claim 7, incorporating the limitations of original Claims 1 and 6 and thus should now be allowable. New Claims 7-10 depend from what is now believed to be allowable Claim 7 and thus should also be allowable.

Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Prompt and favorable action is respectfully requested.

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